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Mass Vaccination: Pueblo County

The Pueblo City-County Health Department exercised its mass immunization plan by offering 10,000 free influenza and pneumonia vaccinations to county residents on November 18, 2006. More than 5,200 vaccinations were administered that day, with an additional 208 for first responders the day before, and 150 at-home vaccinations for mobility impaired persons.

The exercise tested the health department's capacity to vaccinate the entire community in a public health emergency. The funding for the exercise costs came from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. All other support was provided by the department's emergency preparedness and response grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the City of Pueblo and Pueblo County. Annual exercises are a requirement of the public health emergency preparedness and response grant.



The exercise was the first for the region's new Medical Reserve Corps, a group of health care workers trained to respond to health emergencies. All mobile vaccination services, including the immunizations for first responders the day before, were provided by American Medical Response, the local ambulance service provider.

On the day of the exercise, nurses at 100 vaccination stations administered 4,152 influenza shots, 715 Flu Mist nasal spray immunizations and 364 pneumonia vaccinations. Exercise staff set up dozens of stations to conduct triage, intake, medical screening and evaluation. The exercise participants immunized 1,600 people in the first hour of the event. More than 350 participants were surveyed as they exited the site, and 92.5 percent rated the clinic as "excellent."

Dr. Chris Nevin-Woods, the department's executive director and health officer, noted that many of the people who came for shots agreed to wear masks, as they might need to do during a flu pandemic. "The people who came for a free flu shot also learned more about pandemic flu preparedness, and how their health department could help them," Nevin-Woods said. She added, "Exercises such as this serve an important purpose for emergency responders in our community, helping us to integrate communications, improve response capabilities, test systems and build working relationships."



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South, Denver, CO 80246-1530
www.cdphe.state.co.us 303.692.2700 800.886.7689

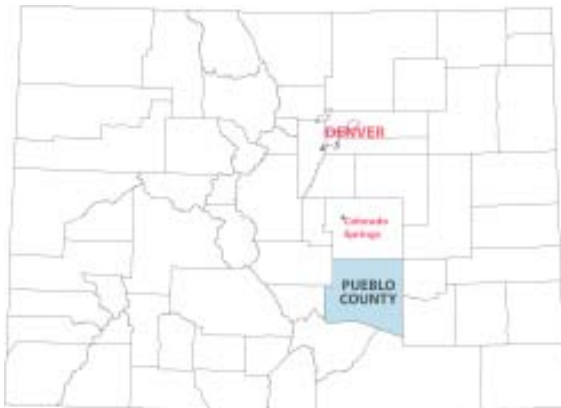


The health department, located in southern Colorado approximately 100 miles south of Denver, required 450 people, including nurses and public health workers and hundreds of volunteers to run the large-scale operation. More than 40 agencies were involved, including the American Red Cross' Pikes Peak Chapter, serving food and water to the participants, volunteers and staff. Pueblo City Transit offered shuttle service from three sites and free city bus service to the flu clinic site.

Exercise Objectives

The Pueblo City-County Health Department showcased its emergency response plans and collaborative efforts with six objectives:

- 1 Demonstrate the South Region all-hazards response community ability to set up and operate a mass vaccination clinic in accordance with the respective county's mass immunization/prophylaxis plan for pandemic influenza.
- 2 Request, receive, transport and disperse assets from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS).
- 3 Train and coordinate volunteers working the mass vaccination clinics.
- 4 Deploy and utilize regional medical providers and resources to staff mass vaccination clinics and to provide immunizations to homebound or quarantined communities in a public health emergency.
- 5 Disseminate consistent, timely and accurate information to local agencies, surrounding regions and the public during a public health emergency.
- 6 Vaccinate first responders and their families prior to the general public according to the Pueblo City-County Mass Immunization/Prophylaxis Plan.



Supporting Documents

- Exercise press kit
- Articles, *Pueblo Chieftain*



Additional Information

Sarah R. Bruestle, Public Information Officer
719.583.4526 or sarah.bruestle@co.pueblo.co.us

Barbara J. Beiser, Editor
303.692.2710 or barbara.beiser@state.co.us



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